

The PRINCE of COURT- POETS

I

In the hall stands an old chimney, with
 pilasters on each
 side of it, adorned with viol and lute, with
 Roman arms
 and heraldic beasts, with stars and suns and
 little Loves
 grotesquely carved. Above its lintel are
 medallions and
 coats of arms; higher still the stone branches
 into a sweet-
 briar among sculptured flames; the whole is
 crowned by
 a crest of three fishes with the device *Non*
fallunt futura
merentem, a band of fleur-de-lys, and the
 escutcheon of
 France. Time has not spared much else in
 the old manor-
 house. For a hundred years sheep nibbled in
 one of its
 courts, corn grew in the other. Not till the
 mid nineteenth
 century were its crumbling rooms inhabited
 again. To-
 day even the hills on whose first slopes it
 stands have lost
 their ancient look, for the forest that
 covered them is
 felled, leaving only scattered copses to keep
 its memory
 green; and in the house itself the past
 survives only here
 and there in a pentagonal tower, a corkscrew
 staircase, a
 rose or star in mouldered stone, or the old
 mottoes in-
 scribed upon the walls like relics of some
 vanished Bel-
shzzzzr—Abstine et Sustine—Voluptati et Gratiis
—Veritas
Filia Temporis—Domine Conserva Me—Avant
*Partir, *Pdr-*
tir?—whither? To that place, was the old
carver's mean-

ing, whence there is no return.

And yet its dead master has come back to
La Poissoniere. Altered and disfigured, but now
restored to him
in men's memories once more, this manor
that his father
built with the help of some Italian sculptor
in the day of
Louis XII and Francois I, remains an apt
emblem of his
destiny, just as its burning eglantine is the
symbol of his
race and name: 'Ronce ard'—'Ronsard'. His
own life was